

April 12, 1973

of these, of these amendments. The issue should have been explored when the issue was before the body. From what I have heard, and the amendments seem to be very difficult to get ahold of except for the press. I haven't had an opportunity to look at them. From what I understand of them, they are superfluous actually in large measure other than the definition which I think is probably a rather dangerous thing to tamper with. I was satisfied with the definition originally contained in the bill. I think this is a very delicate piece of legislation. Either you're going to protect the press or you're going to provide opportunities for the courts to exploit the press to the degree that they find reasonable. I think that this has to be extremely tightly drawn legislation and I think that the original bill accomplished that purpose. As to the portion of a member of the press being required to testify if he's a witness to a crime, I don't think the present bill would exclude that at all. A witness to a crime, that is not a news source relationship, pressman to news source relationship, he has nobody to protect there, there's no competence involved there. It's entirely irrelevant to the issue of freedom of the press or protection of the press from testifying. That has nothing to do with this legislation so I think I think the time, the time has passed and we should not suspend the rules in this case.

SPEAKER: Senator Fowler.

SENATOR FOWLER: Mr. Chairman, members of the body, I think Senator Cavanaugh has expressed it pretty well. I'm a little surprised that Senator Fellman would now want a committee hearing. Today in Government Committee we heard the election bills introduced by the Secretary of State, supposedly non-controversial things and several bugs were, came up in the discussion and amendments are going to have to be worked out. I think this is a very important issue and one that should not be moved through very quickly. It deals with freedom of the press and I think at the committee hearing there was a certain amount of caution in dealing with this bill is very important.

SPEAKER: Senator Stahmer and then Senator Fellman.

SENATOR STAHMER: Well, briefly I'd like to speak in support of Senator Cavanaugh's request. I think we all know what the bill is. This is like a one-sentence amendment, let's get it on--correction, Savage's request--let's get it on General File and get this over with.

SPEAKER: Senator Fellman.

SENATOR FELLMAN: I don't--Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I don't want to get my own personality or the fact that I wasn't at a meeting where this bill came up at a committee hearing which had not been announced that this bill would be considered shouldn't be the issue. I think the facts are that the amendment that Senator Savage is offering is a relatively simple amendment. If Senator Cavanaugh or Senator Fowler would take the time to read the one or two sentences I think they would find it quite easily understandable. Certainly Senator Cavanaugh as a lawyer would be very quick to grasp this and I think every body else in the body would also. Senator Savage, I would point out to all the members here in voting, is not saying that this should be passed without discussion. He's merely saying let's bring the thing to the floor, let's carry out the promises and the commitments we've made and let's have a full-blown discussion right here. There are only 8 people on the Judiciary Committee, one or two or three are often absent--if any of you have sat through committee meetings as I have for the last week or two since we've had afternoon